

Appln No. 09/637,846

Amdt date February 20, 2004

Reply to Advisory Action of January 29, 2004

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The amendment mailed January 12, 2004 in response to the Final Office Action mailed November 20, 2003 was not entered, as indicated in the Advisory Action mailed January 29, 2004, because they "raise new issues that would require further consideration and/or search." To enter the amendment (which has been further amended herein), a request for continuing examination (RCE) is being filed. The content of the January 12, 2004 amendment is incorporated herein and further amended. In addition, new claims 10-19 are added herein for consideration on the merits and allowance.

Claims 1 and 3-19 remain in the present application, of which claims 1, 10 and 15 are independent. Claim 2 has been canceled without prejudice. Claims 1, 8 and 9 have been amended herein. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of claims 1 and 3-9. Further, applicants respectfully request consideration on the merits and allowance of new claims 10-19.

In the Office Action, claims 1 and 3-9 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,592,631 ("Kelly et al."). Further, claim 2 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being obvious over Kelly et al. As claim 2 has been canceled herein, its rejection is now moot.

Applicants respectfully submit that the present invention is a novel and unobvious method of assigning ownership of PCI bus. Applicants have amended claim 1 for clarification. Claim 1 now recites, in a relevant portion, "assigning a master a

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MEDIUM priority level, wherein the master is inactive until the master asserts a request signal when the master wants to take control of the PCI bus; identifying a target requested by the master; issuing a provisional grant to the master in response to the request signal; determining if data associated with the target is available; and assigning a first priority level for ownership of the PCI bus to the master if the data is not available and assigning a second priority level for ownership of the PCI bus to the master if the data is available."

As can be seen in claim 1 above, "the master is inactive [at the MEDIUM priority level] until the master asserts a request signal when the master wants to take control of the PCI bus." Further, "a provisional grant [is issued] to the master in response to the request signal." Applicants submit that Kelly et al. does not teach or suggest such method of assigning ownership of a PCI bus nor is such method obvious in view of the general state of the art.

For example, there is no teaching or suggestion for "assigning a master a MEDIUM priority level, wherein the master is inactive until the master asserts a request signal when the master wants to take control of the PCI bus" nor is there any teaching or suggestion for "issuing a provisional grant to the master in response to the request signal." Therefore, applicants request that the rejection of claim 1 be withdrawn and that it be allowed.

Since claims 3-9 depend from claim 1, they incorporate all the terms and limitations of claim 1 in addition to other limitations, which together further patentably distinguish them

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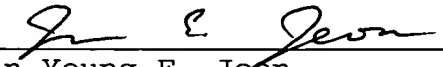
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over the cited references. Therefore, applicants request that the rejection of claims 3-9 be withdrawn and that they be allowed.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, applicants respectfully request allowance of claims 1 and 3-19 and an early issuance of a patent. If there are any remaining issues that can be addressed over the telephone, the Examiner is invited to call applicants' attorney at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,
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